GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:244
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2001
INFANT MORTALITY
RAMESH CHAND TOMAR;TARACHAND BHAGORA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether `Ten Million kids die every year in India from diseases` as reported in the `Statesman` dated June 11, 2001;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to bring down the infant mortality rate?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 244 FOR 8.8.2001

UNICEF, United Nations Population Division and United Nations Statistics Division estimate that 10.63 million children under the age of 5 years died all over the world during 1999.

As per the Sample Registration System, the Infant Mortality Rate for India in 1999 was estimated to be 70 per 1000 live births and Child Mortality Rate in the age group 0-4 years was estimated to be 22.5 per 1000 children during 1998. At these rates, it is estimated that about 2.4 million children under the age of 5 years, including 1.5 million infants die annually in India. Major causes of child mortality include premature birth, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases, malaria and other communicable diseases and vaccine preventable diseases. Contributory factors, inter-alia, include high prevalence of low birth weight babies and high malnutrition rates in children.

Under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme, immunization against six vaccine preventable diseases, facilities for appropriate management of acute respiratory infections, Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) for management of diarrhoeal diseases; and essential newborn care services are provided. Promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding practices, and prophylaxis against Vitamin-A and iron deficiencies are also being provided to improve the nutritional status of children.

Schemes have been launched in weaker districts to improve the access of the people to Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) services. These include RCH Outreach Scheme; RCH Camps; Dai Training Programme and Border District Cluster Strategy Project.